THE VOICE NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER- PASTOR DAVE BLEVINS

In recent weeks, our small fellowship lost two of its heroes of the faith. Robert Cover Sr. went home to be with the Lord on December 22, 2017 at the age of 85 and Jack Zielasko just graduated to heaven on January 27th, 2018 at the age of 96. Both men served the Lord well, and we are so blessed to have had them as part of our fellowship. They are now a part of the "great a cloud of witnesses" that Hebrews 12:1 says "surrounds us". We too are encouraged to "...run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:1b-2. The 11th chapter of Hebrews closes with a sweeping view of "others" who triumphed through faith in the midst of various circumstances. The first group of "others" triumphed through faith in overcoming their situations. Although none of them were perfect, they believed and experienced victory; despite their challenges and weaknesses, and their stories are recorded in God's Hall of Faith. The second group triumphed through their suffering. These heroes of the faith did not experience deliverance from the trial, but instead experienced God's power as He granted each one the ability to go through their trials. They believed and experienced how to have victory in the midst of difficult times. Victory can be experienced through overcoming, but it can also be experienced by the believer who endures as God walks with them through their circumstances. The means of our triumph comes from having an eternal perspective; whether we get over a trial or walk through it. The more you focus on eternity, the better you are able to handle the day to day challenges of this life. You can triumph over your circumstances or you can triumph through them. Either way, faith is the key to experiencing victory, to knowing what it means to be a triumphant Christian, and to understanding what it is to walk in victory and not in defeat. I trust that you have already made your reservation to join us in Erlanger, Kentucky for the 25th annual CGBCI Conference June 29 - July 4 as we focus on "Heroes of the Faith". Don't forget to check out the monthly promotional videos on the CGBCI YouTube page. Just go to YouTube and type "CGBCI" in the search bar. Don't forget to subscribe so you can get an email notification each time a new video is posted.

IMPORTANT: UPDATED INFORMATION

2018 CGBCI CONFERENCE LOCATION

Northern Kentucky Holiday Inn-Cincinnati Airport

Erlanger, KY

June 29th-July 4th, 2018

Room Rate: $89 + tax per night

NEW RESERVATION PHONE NUMBER:

888.294.5067

-OR-

CLICK ON LINK BELOW:

Group Name: Conservative Grace Brethren

Group Code: CGB

Booking Link: CGBCI Conference

NEWS FROM FELLOWSHIP CHURCHES

Elkhart GBC, IN-Pastor Bob Kulp

What does a church do when a member has needed a new roof for ten plus years, has been unable to replace it, is now widowed and discovers in November she has water dripping on her while in bed? Of course, we pray, and we pray, and we pray! Yet God never replaced her roof! Something needed to be done!

On November 26 our congregation voted to hire a Christian roofer to do the job ASAP. We would receive love gifts from the congregation to pay for the materials and the roofer. By the way, the roofer advertised that he would give a 20% discount off his labor price to churches and members!

On a balmy December 4, the work began with the 2-man crew. Things were looking good until the cold and snow arrived (it was December!) While all the old shingles were removed and the felt paper laid by the end of that first week, the snowiness would not quit! We had to wonder if this was a smart idea!! Yet, the Lord showed up BIG time and allowed the roof to be completed on December 21 after much prayer from the pastor, the congregation and the roofer himself. In fact the temps were in the 30's and 40's that last week!

God's people also came through with love gifts, our annual Birthday Gift for Jesus ($ 800+) and wrapping Christmas gifts at our local mall just down the street for 32 hours over 4 days and receiving $ 900+ in donations! By December 31, the $ 6,700 was raised, the roofer paid and the project closed out! Proof again that little is much when God is in it because our congregation is not very big these days! All the glory goes to our awesome God (Zechariah 4:6, 10; Philippians 4:13)!

Peru GBC, IN-Pastor Dave Jodry

The Peru Grace Brethren Church recently extended, to Jordan Bradley the opportunity to enter into an internship for pastoral training. He has accepted this opportunity, and the internship began on January 1, 2018. Please pray for Jordan, that God will use this internship to further develop him for the ministry that He has called him to, and for our church, that we will be used of God as participants in this process.

Pastoral Position Available: Peru GBC continues to seek a man who has thorough Biblical training/education to join our team of Elders as a full-time Associate Pastor. We would like for him to have a heart for family/children's ministries and in particular, lead our youth ministry. He will also share in the preaching, teaching and worship service ministries with the Senior Pastor. This Associate position includes, but is not limited to, these areas of responsibility. Please send letter of interest and resume to: The Council of Elders, Peru Grace Brethren Church, 430 South Broadway, P O Box 552, Peru, IN, 46970.

Reading GBC, Stoystown, PA-Pastor Larry Weigle

Robert and Hope Grew, from the Summit Mills GBC, in Meyersdale, PA, have been chosen as the new Camp Albryoca Caretakers in the Allegheny District. They will move into the Camp Residence Home sometime in March. Thanks to everyone who prayed for this important need.

Pastor Terry Reese, as of February 4th, is now the Associate Pastor of the Reading GBC. Pastor Larry Weigle is the Senior Pastor and is beginning his 46th year as pastor of the Reading GBC.

New Troy GBC, MI-Pastor Bob Mensinger

God is continuing to bless here at New Troy.

January was a very busy month. We continue to minister to our elderly in assisted living and those confined at home for health issues. One of our faithful had to be hospitalized for pneumonia, but is now home recovering. We held our quarterly three-fold communion service in January. The weather has not been kind. We had to cancel all services on the 31st of December and two of the Wednesday night prayer meetings.

We had two new visitors for our Sunday morning services this past month.

Pastor Bob has had very positive feedback on his Sunday morning messages and puts them on CD and leaves them in the local post office. Pray that some new contacts will come from this ministry.

Cornerstone GBC, OH-Pastors Les Vnasdale and Philip Moeller

We will be hosting a one-day conference on **Sunday, February 25**. The speaker is Bob Gillespie, who used to be with Answers in Genesis. Both Cornerstone and Orrville GBCs enjoyed his ministry a few years ago. He is now working with an apologetics ministry called "Reasons for Hope." Check out their website at www.rforh.com.

The schedule is as follows:

9:30 am - Genesis: Key to Abundant Living
10:30 am - Eyewitness History
5:30 pm - Dinosaurs and the Great Deception
6:30 pm - How the Bible Changed the World

All Brethren are invited and encouraged to join us. For questions or directions, call the church at 419-747-5012.

Berean Faith Fellowship, Mount Vernon, OH-Pastor Gordy Harmon

We had an amazing Christmas Eve Service this year, God moved us to do something different. We did a "Silent Night" program where our children with no words did 8 little scenes of the Christmas Story. We prepared a set with a bright light that would broadcast their living and moving silhouette onto a bed sheet, and they simply brought to life the Bible characters as pastor read the Story from the Bible. In between each scene we would sing a verse or two of the Christmas Hymn that went with the living story. The final scene was one of our "shepherds" age 7, singing "What Can I Give Him" done beautifully, that brought it all together. There were tears and sniffles everywhere among the 44 that attended that night. From there we went into our candlelight service, what a night! So many people afterwards expressed their thanks, more than half our attendance was visitors. So many said that they found the program very moving and brought tears. As I thought through the night later it became clear to me what happened. Our audience came to see the cute little Children's Christmas Program, but The Lord blessed it with substance. His Words, the characters, the hymns - it was touching, it was moving, and for a moment the meaning and reality of Christmas was in our hearts.

Listie GBC, PA-Pastor Chris Knight

The Listie GBC had a Winter Picnic and Birthday Fellowship in January. The church provided grilled hotdogs and hamburgers while members of the church family brought in picnic foods. It was a blast! We also celebrated everyone's birthday at once with a big cake (made by Pastor Chris ☺). There was a table for each month of the year decorated for that particular month. The church family sat with folks who shared the same birthday month. It was a great time of fellowship. A Valentine's dinner as well as a week of Winter Bible School is planned for February. Praise God for fellowship with the saints!!

NEWS FROM FOREIGN MISSIONS-NEWFIELDS UPDATE

Happy New Year! In November and December I had the opportunity to help coordinate and build a bush house for a missionary. In order to get to this location, we had to take 3 different cars and 2 boats. That family has now moved into the tribe and has jumped into learning the language! This time of house building was very busy and tiring (part of why we were sick so much, I think.) After this time of building we had several weeks where things slowed down and allowed us to rest. Now we are onto a different opportunity in ministry: an evangelistic Bible study with our guards. This is a "chronological" style approach where we start in Genesis and really look into who is God and what is He like, who is man, Satan and later Jesus when we get to the NT. I am laying the foundations for the Gospel so they can hopefully understand it and trust in Jesus as we get to the cross! We are meeting 6 days a week. Yesterday as I finished a teaching lesson I had asked them about a name of a bush spirit I heard of the day before and one of the guards told me all about it. He discussed how this spirit will show up when someone's wife is working in the garden by herself, how it will appear as her husband and trick her. Then this spirit might sleep with her and the baby that comes will be a possessed child. He said you will know because the eyes will roll around in his head and his arms and legs will shake. He said everyone will know it's the child of a spirit because of this. When the child is a no longer a toddler and is an adolescent, they will let him wander off into the jungle and not go find him. He looked at me after that and said, "Craig, I'm not joking, these things are real." How heart breaking! This man who is "Catholic", who can read and write, who lives in a "big" PNG city, he needs the Gospel and I get the chance to share it with him. As confused and cut off from the Gospel as he is, think of the folks who live in the remote bush places! He also said another time that he knows a person goes to heaven if he does what God says and obeys everything Jesus said, but it's really hard to do everything Jesus said. Please pray for me as I teach in a different language and that their hearts would be soft as their existing beliefs are challenged through the teaching.

Another bit of big news is that I'll be coming back for the College of Pastors meetings in early March. After much deliberation and prayer, it was decided that it would be profitable for me to come back for these meetings. Coming back will provide the opportunity to sit down face to face with the men and update them in more detail about what has taken place since we came to PNG including the conflict with NTM. We are also going to be talking about our plans to continue forward in Tribal church planting and discuss the opportunities and ways forward. We all think this meeting will be timely in order to keep the ministry moving forward at a good pace. We have a friend that is going to be staying with Sara and the kids during this time to help her out (otherwise I wouldn't be come back, this friend is an answer to prayer!) Please pray for the meetings that they are encouraging and profitable for the furthering of the work of reaching the unreached and that I would handle the time changes and lack of sleep well. Please also pray for Sara, the kids and our friend that things would be joyful and uneventful here.

Love all to you and miss you! Lord willing, we are coming back to the states in the fall of 2018 to finalize putting a new team together and then come back to PNG to keep reaching the unreached. Love, Craig & Sara.

NEWS FROM HOME MISSIONS PANEL

Jeff Kran and the Home Mission Panel

The Home Mission Panel praises the Lord for all of those from the CGBCI who have faithfully supported Jeff Kran and his family in their ministry over the years. Even though Jeff's written plan is no longer endorsed under the Home Mission Panel, he continues to faithfully serve the Lord. We pray for the discernment of God's will for Jeff's ministry in the future.

We as a fellowship have given over $10,000.00 for the Krans since this summer to help them transition into the next phase of their ministry. Thank you for your giving! If you wish to continue supporting the Krans we ask that you either support them directly or through Chosen People Ministries as we are no longer receiving funds for the Krans under the Home Missions Panel at this time. If you have any questions please contact any one of the Home Mission Panel members and we will do our best to answer you.

Serving Christ Faithfully,

Ethan Kallberg - Chairman
Gordy Harmon - Secretary
Philip Moeller
Del Miller
Don Farner
Jonathan Edwards
Jeff Pennington

COLLEGE OF PASTORS' UPDATE-PASTOR LARRY E. WILLIAMS

Our COP will be convening for our annual Mid-Year Meetings March 6-8, and our gracious host will be the good folks at Orrville GBC. March 5 will be a travel day. We have a number of business items to handle, including nominations for officers and panel members; a possible change in the Protocols, and discussing and planning anything that emerges from the panel meetings that Tuesday. My focus during our sessions will be on prayer and expository preaching, taking Acts 6.4 "But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." I believe that needs to be the dual thrust of our ministry, and we often forfeit our spiritual power by neglecting them. Please pray for your pastors as we meet.

2018 CGBCI CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Be sure to watch the March issue of the Voice for important information regarding our 2018 CGBCI National Conference! Also, if you missed it, on the first page of this edition of the Voice there was an important change to the phone numbers to call to make reservations. For those that receive this document electronically, you may also "click" on the LINK on the first page and you will be able to make your reservations on line directly with the hotel.

Also, the Hotel has agreed to serve us breakfasts like they did last time we were there in 2016 at no additional cost. And they are offering a 15% discount in the Hotel Restaurant when wearing your name tag (which will be given out at registration.)

The conference calendar of events is posted on the website, at www.cgbci.org. As we get closer to the conference, I will attach the calendar to the Voice as well.

NEWS FROM BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THE FELLOWSHIP

Jeff and Marlene Kran

Mitch Glaser, President of Chosen People Ministries stated in a recent letter, "This is an exciting time of transition for the Krans as they combine more of the teaching and apologetics facets of Jeff's calling into the ministry in Arizona. A local church has joined them in the "First Fridays" ministry, providing music and other support at the Isaiah 53 table they have in downtown Phoenix. Meanwhile, Jeff is finishing the first draft of his doctoral dissertation with hopes of completing it in 2018." We agree with him this is indeed an exciting time.

Our first and biggest priority for this year is the raising of finances to be able to continue this ministry. Our giving report for December was a real blessing to see. The generosity of our supporters put us back up to where we needed to be for that month for which we are grateful. But, it will take a continued maintenance of this rate with some growth to get us exactly where we need to consistently be financially. Please pray about this with us. We depend on our regular monthly supporters to help keep this ministry going. Please pray for them as well. We are excited to see what the Lord has done and will continue to do in the months to come in that area. That is not all he is doing! First Fridays will start again on February 3rd and I have another musician who may be willing to do a set or two of music while we are out on the streets. Our Purim event is scheduled for March 2 in conjunction with Hillside Southern Baptist Church and we are excited about this event. Last year we had a Purim play in which the pastor from Hillside Southern Baptist participated and we expect more people this year. They will also be cohosting a Gospel and the Moslem conference with outreach on Thursday February 22nd through Saturday the 24th I am helping to coordinate. I will be speaking on evidence for the Trinity in the Old Testament, making a case from necessary conditions. I will also be involved with the mosque outreach during that time.

Every week we broadcast a Zionsbanner teaching which combines: exegesis, apologetics, and personal application. We do this Monday nights on Facebook live at 7pm AZ time. You are welcome to join us. We are beginning to see growth in our listener base and hopefully will see an increase in the number of subscribers to our YouTube channel as well. Please pray for us as we continue to move forward with the ministry that God has given us, "Making much of Messiah through God's big story".

"The Voice Newsletter" is the communication tool of the Conservative Grace Brethren Churches International. News or mailing updates should be sent to Tara Bradley at stbradley84@comcast.net, or to 535 S Broadway, Peru, IN, 46970 by the 20th of the month.